ELECTORAL PLATFORM OF QUÉBEC SOLIDAIRE

ADOPTED ON APRIL 28–29, 2012

Québec solidaire

In the spirit of a resolution adopted by the 5th Congress [CONGRÈS 2009-05.09], the positions in the platform are arranged thematically, following the alphabetical order of the French original, which does not denote a priority or order of importance.

AGRICULTURE

1 FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Québec solidaire's food sovereignty policy will favour sustainable development of resources. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

- **A** promote bilateral agreements on fair trade food at the international level;
- **B** support the development of community services for healthy eating and short supply chains for local agricultural products;
- **C** support the promotion and labelling of local products, from production to marketing;
- **D** introduce in Québec an ethical and ecological rating system for local and foreign agricultural products in order to inform citizens of the impact of their consumer choices; the awarded rating will be visible on all products and will rate the methods of production and transformation using social and environmental criteria.

2 FARMLAND AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

Québec solidaire will guarantee the protection and the dynamic use of farmland. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:



- **A** legislate to affirm the multi-functionality of agriculture (economic, social, and environmental) and establish a new social contract between Québec society, farmers, and rural communities;
- **B** prevent all speculation on farmland;
- **C** develop a rural policy which includes:
  - **I** shared powers between Regional county municipalities (RCM), joint land use planning commissions, and watershed organizations so that these entities collaborate in occupying the land in a manner that is respectful of ecosystems;
  - **II** the inclusion, in the RCM land use plans, of a master water plan and a water management standard contract for the watersheds as well as the creation of ecosystems dedicated to modes of production that require an ecosystemic management approach, such as the cultivation of indigenous species and organic agriculture;
  - **III** the promotion, labelling, and marketing of local products in short supply chains.
- **D** encourage farmer landownership.

3 NEXT GENERATION OF FARMERS AND INNOVATION

Québec solidaire will support the next generation of farmers (most notably female farmers) and foster its emergence. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

- **A** encourage small, diversified and innovative production;
- **B** simplify the process of dividing farmland;
- **C** make long term capital available to the next generation of farmers to acquire farmland and take over farms;
- **D** increase the sums available to support agriculture graduates who wish to start their own farming business;
- **E** amend legislation in order to foster trade union pluralism among farmers;
- **F** enable collective ownership of farmland and farms;
- **G** require that the Agricultural Marketing Board and Food of

Quebec set prices for food products from production under the supply management which will be subjected to fair sharing of the production quotas with the next generation of farmers;

H relax the eligible costs criteria in the establishment grant of the Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ) in order to reduce the required initial investment.

ALTER–GLOBALIZATION

4 INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SOLIDARITY

Québec solidaire will define Québec's place in the world in a new, critical, and mutually supportive way. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A consider progressive alternatives to the current free trade agreements (e.g., NAFTA*) and will oppose signing any new secret and harmful trade agreements, such as CETA** with the European Union;

B at the economic, political, social, and cultural levels, develop international relations based on fairness, solidarity, and respect for the environment;

C set up an international solidarity agency, which will promote just and ecological development, human rights, peace, and equality between women and men, and will support groups and organizations working towards these goals.

* **NAFTA** North American Free Trade Agreement.
** **CETA** Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

5 RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Québec solidaire recognizes the rights of indigenous peoples, and to this effect will:

A have the National Assembly pass the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), without conditions, and apply it;

B to all development projects that affect indigenous communities' territories, add an agreement with these communities concerning the type of development and the terms which would best meet their aspirations;

C firmly support the steps taken by Québec's indigenous women to have their fundamental rights respected, notably their right to security, particularly by increasing funding for shelters for indigenous women and organizations that assist female victims of abuse;

D actively support indigenous communities' efforts to spread, reclaim, or preserve their traditional languages.

CULTURE

6 FRENCH LANGUAGE

Québec solidaire will promote French, Québec's official language, as the common language in all spaces dedicated to collective life, especially in work environments. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A strengthen the enforcement of the Charter of the French Language in all work environments;

B broaden its scope to encompass companies with 10 employees or more and support their francisation;

C restore to the Charter its original scope, notably by banning recourse to bridging schools.

7 CULTURAL CREATION AND PRODUCTION

Québec solidaire encourages access to a diversified artistic culture because of the way this nourishes and rejuvenates the spirit, informs, questions established ways of thinking, gives access to alternative world views, and reflection on the multiple dimensions of life. As such, it promotes democracy, freedom, and ties between citizens in addition to carrying meaning, a sense of identity, values, and creativity. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A substantially increase funding to carry out professional artistic projects and financially support the development of emerging and alternative trends and practices in the arts, with fair distribution between regions;

B ensure access to at least four professional cultural events for elementary and high school students;

C financially support the development of amateur artistic activities throughout the population, especially in the regions.

ECONOMY

8 TAXATION

Québec solidaire will readjust taxation and, to this effect, will:

A introduce a truly progressive income tax by adding tax brackets which take into account income disparities;

B revise companies' participation in tax payments to ensure that they contribute their share;

C make corporate taxes progressive by introducing tax brackets;

D re-evaluate tax incentives (tax deferrals, cuts, holidays, and exemptions) with the aim of progressively reducing them;

E fight tax avoidance and evasion by tightening company tax laws and use all necessary means to determine and collect money owed to the state.

9 NATURAL RESOURCES

Québec solidaire will enable Québec to regain control over its resources, and to this effect will:

A nationalize the strategic resources for which Québec has extraction and exploitation technical expertise, especially certain raw materials and energy-related resources;

B enter into majority partnerships with companies exploiting other resources under two conditions: technological transfer and training of the workforce;

C set up an adequate system of royalties for extraction and industrial use of natural resources, including water, by ensuring that the benefits are fairly distributed between regions and the state;

D ensure, in the pursuit of the regionalization of the economy, that mineral or other resource processing (secondary processing)

and conversion into finished products (tertiary processing) take place mainly in the regions where the resources were extracted, or otherwise elsewhere in Québec, and introduce fiscal or legal incentives for this;

E eliminate the supremacy of the Mining Act and grant a veto on mining permits to the affected communities;

F submit all bids for exploration and exploitation of natural values to a rigorous environmental and social evaluation and a true public consultation before a permit is granted;



G implement ecosystemic forest management in order to maintain biodiversity;

H plan logging operations and make them compatible with other uses of the forest.

10 ECONOMIC GROWTH

Québec solidaire does not consider economic growth to be an end in itself. Quebec solidaire will immediately adopt laws, regulations, fiscal measures, or other dispositions to discourage overproduction, overconsumption, over indebtedness, and any other activity unsustainable in the long run, while fostering development that enables the betterment of the collective well-being and ensures that the rights of all are respected. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A start decreasing, and perhaps even eliminate, noxious, obsolete, or useless operations (e.g., shale gas, asbestos, uranium);

B foster the creation and growth of industries and social infrastructures which create jobs equally accessible to women and men in socially useful sectors that respect the environment, particularly community services, local agriculture, public transportation, and ecological construction.

11 STATE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Québec solidaire will use all economic levers available to foster an economy which serves the public good. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A ensure better transparency at the Caisse de dépôt et placement (CDPQ) by changing its mandate so that it will be accountable to the National Assembly rather than the government and by adding citizen representation on its board of directors;

B review the role of the CDPQ from the perspective of an economic development of Québec that is based on social and environmental values, and on job creation rather than on investment abroad or assistance to foreign companies to set up business, with a goal of supporting Québec's industrial skills and creativity;

C establish an action plan when a company shuts down or relocates in order to:

- **I** recover the advances made by the state to the company;
- **II** ensure that the company pays back the workers' pension fund;
- **III** oblige the company to disassemble its facilities if they are obsolete or in want of proper repair and restore the land to its original state;
- **IV** take over facilities if they are in proper state of repair to hand them over to a new company, preferably a cooperative;
- **V** ensure that the CDPQ supports the formation of workers cooperatives,

provided that they be potentially healthy and sustainable;

D consult concerned government authorities if there are massive layoffs to:

- **I** demand reimbursement of received grants;
- **II** impose a victim surcharge to the company to help those who are laid off;
- **III** nationalize a solvent company or one which is a persistent offender and financially support the formation of a workers' cooperative to replace it;

E provide Investissement Québec with the necessary budget to efficiently support new companies, especially small businesses, cooperatives, and social economic bodies, all of which create significant numbers of jobs in Québec.

EDUCATION

12 FREE AND ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

Québec solidaire will ensure lifelong, universal, free and accessible education. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A eliminate all fees charged to students and their parents when attending any public or parapublic institutions from preschool to university;

B improve nutritional support programs for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;

C foster the development of extracurricular activities and make them freely available in all public elementary schools and high schools;

D improve the system of financial assistance for education until the guaranteed minimum income applies to students.

13 PERSISTENCE IN SCHOOL

Québec solidaire will render accessible for all an attractive public school system which fosters persistence in school. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A encourage specific or alternative, non-elitist educational projects democratically designed by communities, in compliance with the policy directions of the Ministry of Education;

B reduce the number of students per class, hire more professionals providing direct services to students, and encourage the formation of multidisciplinary intervention teams;

C support families, schools, and communities in elaborating projects together, with a view to supporting persistence in school and reducing intimidation and violence;

D improve resources dedicated to supporting teachers and non-teaching staff (access to accompaniment and occupational integration services, to upgrading, to psycho-affective and psychosocial support, etc.).

14 INCREASED SUPPORT TO THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Québec solidaire will adopt a plan to progressively transfer to the public system (by all government grants allocated to private schools, and integrate into the public system those institutions of the private system willing to do so.

ENVIRONMENT

15 ENERGY AND CLIMATE

Québec solidaire will advocate reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% compared to 1990 levels by 2020 and by 95% by 2050.. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

- **A** found Énergie-Québec to oversee the entirety of energy production and distribution over Québec's territory as well as energy-related research and will put energy-related companies under public control (majority ownership by the state or complete nationalization if need be);
- **B** nationalize and develop wind power through Éole-Québec;
- **C** ban fossil fuel exploration and production (including shale gas) and nuclear power throughout the territory of Québec;
- **D** implement a strategy to stop using fossil fuels in their various forms by 2030.
- **E** launch an expansive energy efficiency program, covering both the renovation of existing buildings and the tightening of norms for new construction and industrial processes.

16 TRANSPORTATION

Québec solidaire will prioritize public transportation accessibility and development as well as repairing roads and bridges. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

- **A** restore Transports Québec's expertise and vocation, which is to serve the population, notably by limiting the use of subcontractors;
- **B** develop an expansive plan for public transportation across Québec, for which the priorities will be:
  - **I** to reach our greenhouse gas reduction goals;
  - **II** to increase public transportation in major cities;
  - **III** to progressively electrify the entire network;
  - **IV** to ensure financial access to public transportation everywhere and to aim for free transportation within ten years;
- **C** support alternatives, notably fiscal incentives to buy fuel-efficient vehicles, to compensate for the lack of public transportation where population density is too low;
- **D** encourage the transport of goods by rail or water with the help of financial incentives.

17 BIODIVERSITY

Québec solidaire will strengthen Québec's strategy on biodiversity and, to this effect, will:

- **A** impose restrictions on all development projects, including those which threaten urban forests;
- **B** set a minimum target of 20% of protected areas, spread proportionally over the ecological regions of Québec (including the northern territories, the commercial forest, and the maritime territories), and establish plant and wildlife corridors.

18 RIGHT TO WATER

Québec solidaire will respect the *res communis* status of water and, to this effect, will:

- **A** adopt the United Nations Resolution of July n the basic right to safe drinking water and sanitation;
- **B** give the Bureau des connaissances sur l'eau the required resources to carry out its mandate.

FAMILY

19 CHILDCARE CENTRES

Québec solidaire will develop the childcare centre network to offer services adapted to the diverse needs of various families and environments. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A create 40,000 new spaces in facilities;

B relax the structure of childcare centres to support families with parents working in non-standard jobs;

C amend funding rules to enable childcare centres to extend access to part-time and summertime daycare, notably by implementing drop-in centres affiliated with childcare centres;

D gradually transfer funding for private daycare to public childcare centres.

CIVIC INTEGRATION

20 IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION

Québec solidaire will assist the integration of immigrants and ethnic minorities. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A follow the objectives of the Act Respecting Equal Access by increasing the number of members of ethnic communities and immigrants hired in the public service in order to reach the same proportions as they exist in Québec society;

B implement an ethnic and visible minorities hiring program in private companies with 50 or more employees which benefit from grants, loans, or contracts of $50,000 or more from the government of Québec, municipalities, and school boards;

C implement specific programs for women to facilitate learning French and gaining access to education and the labour market;

D increase financial support to associations and community organizations in the larger urban centres and the regions that develop, welcome, support, and integration activities and services for ethnic minorities and immigrants, including basic training on labour rights;

E develop and reach the required agreements, notably with educational institutions and professional corporations, to facilitate the updating of professional knowledge and experience required for the recognition of foreign diplomas and work experience;

F repeal the waiting period required of new arrivals for employment assistance and health insurance.

21 RIGHTS OF TEMPORARY FOREIGN WORKERS

In order to ensure that hiring foreign workers be better supervised, Québec solidaire will amend, the section entitled "Temporary workers" in the *Regulation Respecting the Selection of Foreign Nationals* in order to:

A authorize workers to change employers within the same employment sector, to choose their place of residence and to leave the place of residence provided by the employer without being considered noncompliant with their employment contract;

B guarantee the extension of legal status if a complaint is filed so they can reside and work in Québec during the course of the procedures;

C provide the necessary support in the event of a violation of rights

or a work injury, including an emergency shelter;

D implement systematic employer and workplace inspection mechanisms to ensure compliance with Québec labour laws and exclude employers who are persistent offenders;

E introduce the obligation to translate the employment contract into the worker's native language including the relevant Québec labour standards;

F give foreign farm workers access to community-based hospitality, support, francisation, and integration programs funded by the Ministry of Immigration and Cultural Communities*;

G comply with the Convention Concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers, to supervise and give a sense of responsibility to employment agencies and employers.

* Family helpers already have access to these programs.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

22 HOUSING

Québec solidaire will implement a housing policy based on access to housing for all. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A carry out the ecological construction of 50,000 new universally accessible social housing units (public, cooperative, or communal) to meet the needs of all segments of the population;

B facilitate access to individual or collective ownership in rural regions where rental housing is underdeveloped;

C adequately fund the Régie du logement and establish reasonable time limits for processing claims by tenants;

D create an online national lease registry administered by the Régie du logement;

E adopt a policy to fend off real estate and land speculation which artificially drives up the prices of land, houses, and rent.

23 GUARANTEED MINIMUM INCOME

Québec solidaire will implement, with the goal of totally eliminating poverty, a guaranteed and unconditional minimum income which will initially be fixed at $12,000 and progressively increased afterwards. This income will be paid on an individual basis starting at age 1to replace welfare or to supplement either a work income or another income support when it is below the established threshold. Accessibility to this measure will gradually increase.

24 UNIVERSAL PUBLIC PENSION PLAN

Québec solidaire will progressively transform the Quebec Pension Plan into a universal public pension plan. It will cover self-employment and the invisible work done primarily by women. Funding will be provided by employers, the state, and workers. The latter will have at least 50% of seats at the plan's decision-making authority. Pensions will be predetermined and adjusted to the cost of living.

25 LEGAL AID

Québec solidaire will proceed with legal aid reform so that:

A an unattached individual working at minimum wage (40-hour week) qualifies for free legal aid, including extrajudicial fees;

B eligibility thresholds for other applicants are amended accordingly;

C eligibility to legal aid be calculated according to the applicant's monthly income;

D the annual indexation of eligibility thresholds is preserved.

26 HOMELESSNESS POLICY

Québec solidaire will adopt a global homelessness policy, which will include urban indigenous people.

HEALTH

27 PHARMACEUTICALS

Québec solidaire will implement:

A a universal public drug insurance plan;

B Pharma-Québec, a public pharmaceutical acquisition and production centre.



28 HEATHCARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Québec solidaire will guarantee public, universal, free, quality, local health care and social services, 24/7, thanks to:

A a complete network of multidisciplinary clinics, including strengthened local community health centres (CLSCs);

B an expanded homecare system;

C a family physician for each individual;

D a midwife for all women who would like one;

E concrete measures to end privatization in the healthcare system (e.g., a watertight seal between the public and private sectors, elimination of ancillary fees).

SOVEREIGNTY

29 CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Québec solidaire recognizes the Quebecers' right to choose its institutions and its political status. To this effect, it will set in motion from the day it takes office a constituent assembly process. Throughout the process, Québec solidaire will advocate for creating a sovereign Quebec state, without assuming what the outcome of the debates will be. The Constituent Assembly will:

A be elected by universal franchise, made up of an equal number of women and men and representative of tendencies, different socio-economic backgrounds, and the cultural diversity present in Québec society;

B conduct a far-reaching, participatory democratic process to consult the population of Québec on:

- **I** the values, rights, and principles upon which community life should be based;
- **II** the political status of Québec;
- **III** the definition of its institutions;
- **IV** heir delegated powers, responsibilities, and resources;

C develop, from the outcome of the consultation, one or more proposals which will be put to the population in a referendum.

LABOUR

30 MINIMUM WAGE

Québec solidaire will increase the minimum wage so that the gross earnings of an unattached individual working full-time correspond to the low income cut-off*, and will adjust it annually to the cost of living.

* For example, for a 40-hour work week, the minimum wage will increase from $9.90 to $11.72 and, for a 35-hour work week, the minimum wage will be $13.37.

31 EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY

Québec solidaire will fight employment discrimination and, to this effect, will:

A tighten standards to eliminate all disparity based on employment status and include the principle in the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms;

B strengthen and extend the enforcement of the Pay Equity Act to all workplaces;

C adopt incentives and affirmative action for women in order to dismantle job ghettos that trap women in low-valued positions and to foster their access to non-traditional occupations.

32 UNION RIGHTS

Québec solidaire will guarantee the exercise of trade union rights and, to this effect, will:

A allow multi-employer accreditation (pooling into the same accreditation individuals with different employers);

B amend the anti-scab legislation to prevent all indirect use of employees by the employer involved in a labour dispute as well as the use of production by alleged volunteers;

C ban both lockouts and recourse to injunctions against picketing.

DEMOCRATIC LIFE

33 ELECTORAL REFORM

Québec solidaire will move forward on electoral reform which will:

A implement a compensatory mixed voting system in which 60% of members of the National Assembly (MNAs) are elected in accordance with the first-past-the-post system (current voting system) and 40% will be divided between regions in such a way as to ensure that the total number of MNAs for each party follows the proportion of votes won at both the regional and the national levels for all parties having won at least 2% of the vote;

B amend the Election Act to implement fixed-date elections;

C introduce binding measures and incentives (financial and otherwise) to increase representation by women;

D foster the accountability of elected officials, notably by obliging at least one public consultation meeting to be held per year.

34 DECENTRALIZATION

Québec solidaire will foster the development of localities, regions, and Québec as a whole by and for those who live there, its main objectives being to better the living conditions of local populations and look after the environment. To this effect, Québec solidaire will:

A. transfer state powers, responsibilities, and resources to municipal or regional bodies to optimize civic participation and the quality of the services provided by each jurisdiction;

B. democratize municipal and regional bodies, notably through electing by universal suffrage all members of these bodies, including wardens of Regional county municipalities (RCM);

C. ensure consultation with cities and municipalities affected by any resource development project to plan the development of the required infrastructures.

35 PUBLIC INQUIRY ON GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

Québec solidaire will implement a public inquiry on the awarding of government contracts and political party funding in sectors that are not covered by the Charbonneau Commission, i.e., contracts awarded by Hydro-Québec as well as those related to computing sectors and professional services (lawyers, architects, etc.).



Québec solidaire

DEBOUT